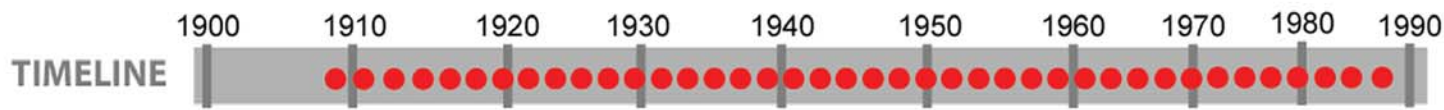




# Profiles of Our Founding Masters

## GŌJŪ-RYŪ KARATE MASTER GOGEN YAMAGUCHI



**Born:** Jan 20, 1909 in Kyushu, Japan.

**Died:** May 20, 1989 in Japan.

When he was thirteen years of age, he studied Goju-Ryu Karate Kempo with a local instructor. Later, while studying at the University, he initiated a Karate club and invented the free sparring form. By this time, all karate schools in Okinawa and Japan practiced kata and pre-arranged application exercises, but never attempted to practice free-form sparring.

In 1931 at age 22, he was introduced to Chojun Miyagi. Up until that time, he had only focused on the "hard" aspects of Goju-Ryu, and he thus received the name "Gogen" ('rough') from Chojun Miyagi and authorized him to promote the school of Goju-Ryu Karate in Japan. In 1950, he founded the national organization of All Japan Karate-Do Goju-Kai in Tokyo, Japan. Gogen received 10th Degree Black Belt from Chojun Miyagi in 1951. He succeeded in unifying all Karate schools into one union. As a result, the All Japan Karate Federation was established in 1964. He was recognized as one of the greatest Karate masters in Japan. He unified all Karate exercises by employing an extremely well-organized method.

As a result of the introduction of free-style sparring which he developed, the art of Karate had become a more active and popular art in Japan as well as in other parts of the world. In the United States, he came to be known as the "Cat" for his cat-like stances and movements and for his long mane of hair.

